



Full Court Press

April 2007

A newsletter for the employees of the Fourth Judicial District of the State of Minnesota

Volume 15
Issue 4

In this Issue: Trends

By Mark S. Thompson, District Court Administrator

A trend is frequently defined as a “direction.” A trend pushes us somewhere...whether one is prepared to go there or not. Trends indicate how our business practices will need to adapt “to provide a system of Justice that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.” Our mission statement calls us to strive to respond to trends impacting the residents and parties we serve.

Recently, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) identified ten trends impacting state courts (see sidebar). The Fourth Judicial District’s strategic goals anticipate and address the challenging trends facing trial courts across the nation.

In this issue, several trends are actively addressed through current best practices and innovations. Judge Holahan’s MADD award demonstrates problem-solving courts (#8), as well as Chief Judge Wieland’s article on our three problem-solving courts.

The impact of technology (#2) spans from the moment one of us applies for a job to the Criminal Division’s “MNCIS dress rehearsal” scheduled in May.

Cultural diversity (#3) is in the limelight this month with the Spring Judicial Retreat’s theme “Diverse Groups and Bias” and the EAR Team Award winner, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Project Team. If you would like to become more involved in diversity, now is your chance to inquire about the newly created Diversity Council.

Ten Trends Impacting State Courts

1. Emergency Preparedness
2. The Impact of Technology
3. Cultural Diversity: The Use of Interpreters
4. The Impact of an Aging Population
5. Privacy and Public Access to Court Records
6. Judicial Independence and Selection
7. State Court and Budget Challenges
8. Problem-solving Courts
9. Access to Justice: The Self-Represented Litigant
10. Court Performance Measurement

The impact of the aging population (#4) is represented by the retirements of Judge Rob Lynn and his wife / judicial clerk, Patty. District Court has experienced an unprecedented exodus of 14 judges since 2005.

Trends will keep us on our toes in this ever-changing global society. The combination of your knowledge, skills and abilities applied to the challenges facing courts will continue to count us as a leading urban court. Thank you for your dedication to the third branch of government.

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Fourth Judicial District

Mission: To provide a system of Justice that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.

Vision: To be recognized as providing an accessible, fair, courteous, efficient and innovative system of Justice.



Judge Holahan with the 2007 Metro Judge Award



MADD honors Judge Holahan and Judge Aldrich

Each year, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) recognizes judges committed to addressing DWI issues. This year, MADD honored Judge John Holahan with the 2007 Metro Judge Award for his work in developing and implementing the Hennepin County Adult DWI Court Pilot Program.

MADD received five separate nominations for Judge Holahan. The nominations highlighted his unwavering personal and professional interest in improving the criminal justice system response to DWI cases and alcohol addiction. Under Judge Holahan's leadership a 15 member team developed the Adult DWI Court Pilot Program. The program aims to increase public safety, reduce repeat DWI offenses and reduce DWI-related crashes and deaths.

Upon announcement of the award, Judge Holahan said, "The wonderful team that I am working with really deserves the award, so I accept the recognition on their behalf."

MADD also recognized Judge Stephen Aldrich as a 2007 Metro Judge for his use of staggered sentencing and his approach to accountability. Judge Aldrich hands out a pink card to each DWI defendant and requires them to return to court on a quarterly basis with the pink card. The card serves as a visual reminder of sobriety each time one the probationer opens his or her wallet.



Judge Aldrich (center) accepts the award from Judge John Holahan. Carol Haselmann of MADD displays the pink card Judge Aldrich requires participants to present at quarterly meetings.



Judge John Holahan at a working session of the Adult DWI Court Team. It's during these sessions that the team determines participant eligibility, discusses recommendations and reviews progress.



A fond farewell

By Jamie Smith, Communications Assistant

Fourth Judicial District judges, court staff and stakeholders gathered on April 2, 2007 to honor Judge Robert Lynn as he stepped down from the bench after nearly twenty years. Also honored that day was his judicial clerk (and wife) Patty Lynn, who leaves with over thirty years of experience.

Minnesota Court of Appeals Judge Edward Toussaint, Jr. attended the retirement celebration and presented Judge Lynn with a plaque from the Supreme Court. Judge Toussaint noted that Judge Lynn's common sense approach for the past 19 years was well-known and much appreciated by his colleagues and the parties who appeared in his courtroom.

Next, Fourth District Chief Judge Lucy Wieland presented Judge Lynn with a plaque commemorating his career in the Fourth. Judge Wieland recalled her own early days on the bench, "When I was appointed in 1990, Rob was my mentor judge. I learned so much from him." She went on to describe the impact the Lynns had on everyone around them and how there will be a hole to fill in their retirement.

Assistant Court Administrator Marsha Unthank presented Patty Lynn with a plaque honoring her thirty-plus years of service to the courts. Some laughs resonated throughout the room as Marsha described the human resource policy issues she had to research when she realized that Judge Lynn's judicial clerk was soon to be his bride.

Finally, when it was Judge Lynn's turn to address the well-wishers, he reflected that, "I have a lot of reason to be humble. Thank you so much for coming."

Thank you to Judge Rob Lynn and Patty Lynn for your service and the special gifts you shared with the Fourth Judicial District throughout the years.



Scenes from Judge & Patty Lynn's retirement party on April 2, 2007

1. Minnesota Court of Appeals Judge Edward Toussaint, Jr. presents Judge Lynn with a plaque honoring Judge Lynn for his 17+ years on the Fourth Judicial District Court bench as Chief Judge Lucy Wieland and Marsha Unthank look on.
2. Self-explanatory!
3. Some of the well-wishers who attended the noontime celebration.
4. Judicial clerk Patty Lynn accepts a plaque for her years of service in the Fourth Judicial District.

A pot o' gold and many thanks await employees at the spring ovations celebration

Over 100 court employees received Oventions in the preceding quarter. The Employee Appreciation and Recognition (EAR) Committee created the Oventions program as a way for a person to recognize a court employee for his or her extra effort. A court customer, related stakeholder or fellow employee may award an Ovation.

In honor of the 100+ employees receiving Oventions in the last quarter, the EAR Committee hosted a St. Patrick's theme celebration with snacks, beverages and a game with prizes.

Thank you to the District Court employees who contribute on a daily basis to the mission and goals of the Fourth Judicial District. Your work product, positive attitudes and commitment to public service is appreciated.

Thank you to the EAR Committee for their commitment to recognizing court staff and hosting this event.



From left: Rita Weimar (PSF), JoAnn Gracyacz (Facilities) and Leo Willey (Criminal) try their hands at LUCKY-O.



Lynn Lahd (Jury Office) calls out the LUCKY-O bingo like a pro.



Some of the names of employees recognized with an Ovation



Real gold? No - these coins were made of chocolate!

Limited English Proficiency Project Team receives 2007 EAR team appreciation award

By Amanda Bloodsaw, Court Operations Leadworker (Civil)

The Employee Appreciation and Recognition (EAR) Committee would like to congratulate the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Project Team on being selected as the 2007 winner of the Team/Group Appreciation Award. This award is presented to a team or group who are working together to achieve a defined or common goal.

This is one of the appreciation awards from our committee that is given to recognize an individual or group who demonstrate the vision of District Court through their performance and initiative.

Here are some of the comments made by the nominator that led to this team being chosen for this year's award:

"The amount this group has accomplished certainly exceeds the expectations of its directors and members. Those accomplishments include the administration of a court-wide LEP resources inventory and survey, the identification of more than 90 court forms and documents for translation into multiple languages and the development of the comprehensive, first-ever Fourth District LEP Resources Manual."

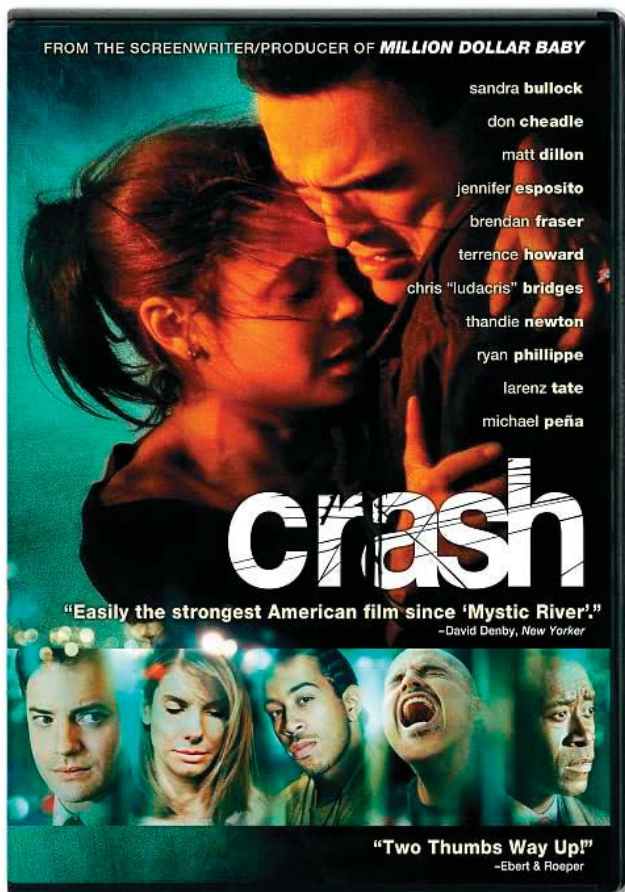
"This team demonstrates the dedication of the Judicial District to its LEP customers and customer service and their work supports the court's mission and vision statements. The team continues to challenge themselves to meet their goals in new and creative ways to

continue their legacy for the future."

"The team has motivated District Court staff to be more aware of cultural diversity, LEP, and its role in providing excellence in customer service."

As a reward for all their hard work and dedication, the team will be honored with a pizza party!

Congratulations to the team including: **Abdul Afrah, Steve Bittick, Maria Boley, Elaine Briscoe, Deb Carpenter, Ali Egal, Stepheni Hubert, Pam Kilpela, Chris Matimba, Angel Montanez, Lidia Morales, Anna Scholl, Armando Vilchez & Leah Wermerskirchen.**



"Diverse Groups and Bias" explored at the Spring Bench Retreat

The theme of the Spring Judicial Bench Retreat is "Diverse Groups and Bias." Part of attendees pre-work is to view the film "Crash" followed by a facilitated discussion about the meanings and implications of bias.

In this film, issues of race and gender cause a group of strangers in Los Angeles to physically and emotionally collide.

Have you seen this film? What are your comments?

News from Your Court- Problem-solving courts: a search for better outcomes

By Lucy A. Wieland, Chief Judge

The voices Kevin heard in his head drove him to alcohol, then cocaine. He lost his job, house and marriage. The cycle of drugs-crime-jail became his routine. The problem-solving approach applied by Mental Health Court ended this cycle by addressing his core issue, mental illness. By requiring him to cooperate with his psychiatrist and take his prescribed medication, the court was able to break the cycle.

During the last decade there has been a quiet but dramatic transformation in how our court does its work. In the past, the principal role of the court was to try cases and send people to jail or place them on probation, only worrying about them if they came back on a new case. Often, offenders who committed minor crimes were jailed for short periods of time, and when they get out, they return to the same behavior that got them jailed in the first place. Then they got arrested again, some of them time after time.

Problem-solving courts around the nation grew out of the public's demand that the justice system change to begin treating the underlying conditions resulting in crime, rather than simply building more jails. The problem-solving court approach focuses on defendants whose underlying medical and social problems have contributed to recurring contacts with the justice system. During the last decade, these methods have shown significant promise in producing more effective outcomes for some of the courts' most troublesome cases. In Kevin's case, this allowed him to restore himself and live peacefully and honestly in his community.

The problem-solving approach seeks to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities by

making the offender accountable personally to the judge. The offender must come to court regularly, be monitored at home and in the community, go to treatment, take medication, get a job, and prove the ability to be a productive citizen with the assistance of community-based organizations.

Researchers have documented that problem-solving courts improve the accountability of both offenders and service providers, satisfy communities, and bring new resources into the courthouse. More than this, problem-solving courts have established a solid track record in changing the life paths of victims, offenders, and community residents in crime-plagued neighborhoods. Problem-solving courts are simply good courts.

Mental Health Court is one of the three courts in Hennepin County that have implemented the problem-solving approach. At any given time, over two hundred defendants are under some form of Mental Health Court supervision in Hennepin County. In 2006, there were 340 new cases referred to this court. Its mission is to increase public safety by addressing the mental health needs of defendants. Its goals are to reduce repeat offenses, increase compliance with outpatient treatment and compliance with medication, reduce emergency room visits and reduce hospital time.

Like Mental Health Court, other problem-solving courts aim at improving responses to society's perpetual problems. The costs of alcohol and drug abuse to our community are overwhelming. Apart from the personal toll on individuals and families, alcohol and drug abuse are the reasons a majority of offenders enter the criminal justice system. To break the cycle of abuse and jail, the Hennepin County court

has established DWI and Drug courts.

It's estimated that 130 out of 439 eligible offenders will elect to participate in the 2007 pilot of Adult DWI Court. Its purpose is to increase public safety and reduce repeat DWI offenses by helping offenders get sober and stay sober. Hennepin's new DWI Court is one of 90 in the nation. They are supported by advocacy groups including Mothers Against Drunk Driving for a simple reason—they work.

In 2006, 1,774 new drug cases were filed in Drug Court. Our reconstructed Drug Court plans to work with the most serious of these offenders to end their drug addiction and help them return to a law-abiding and productive life. The evidence suggests that an up-front investment in problem-solving justice reaps significant dividends—one study suggests that every dollar spent on drug courts yields ten dollars in cost savings from reduced incarceration, victimization, and crime.

Over the years, the courts and criminal justice system have seen that the costs of not pursuing problem-solving justice are far greater; victims whose needs go unaddressed, offenders who continue to commit crime after crime, and the continued erosion of public trust in justice.

Those of us who work in the justice system want to make a difference in our communities; we want to have a positive impact on offenders and reduce crime. Using the problem-solving court approach is an exciting opportunity for us to do a better job. For more information on these and other programs, visit the website at mncourts.gov/district/4.

Seeking employees to serve on Diversity Action Council

By Chris Matimba, Human Resources Specialist

We are seeking employees to serve on a Diversity Action Council. who want to play a role in developing and implementing diversity initiatives as well as action plans for the Fourth District. While the number of members on the committee will be limited, there will be other opportunities for employees to participate in work groups and share gifts and talents.

Over the past 15-plus years, there have been numerous diversity initiatives by employees, supervisors, managers and judges to embrace diversity; and ensure equal access for its employees; and the community we serve. Some of these initiatives have included the Equal Justice Committee, an Equal Justice Handbook of diversity related policies and programs, diversity

training, diversity fairs, creating more inclusive practices in recruitment and hiring, and enhanced interpreter services which includes the Limited English Proficiency Plan managed by the Scheduling Unit. While the Equal Justice Committee continues to meet, the committee is comprised primarily of judges whose purpose is to address the delivery of justice in the courts at the district and statewide levels.

As the court refocuses its commitment to diversity and equal access, we are establishing a Diversity Action Council that will be primarily employee owned and focus on developing programs and resources for employees as we prepare for the changes in our workplace and community. The purpose of this council

will be to redefine our diversity initiatives and allocate resources to develop and implement a diversity plan that will be aligned with the strategic goals of the court and its Equal Justice Committee. We envision this council will be comprised of approximately fifteen employees and will include a cross representation of administrative and judicial staff, managers and supervisors.

If you feel passionate about and are committed to creating an inclusive work place, and/or are interested in serving on the council, please contact me at 348-5754 or e-mail me by 4:30 p.m., April 20th. I will follow up with you on next steps for convening the group. More information will be forthcoming.

Searching & applying for a job

By Naomi Gooselaw, Human Resources Coordinator

Whether you are just starting your career at the Fourth Judicial District or you are a seasoned employee seeking a new challenge, the Fourth District offers you many job opportunities in which to grow, learn, and fulfill your greatest potential. Current Minnesota Judicial Branch job openings are available for you to view online on the Department of Employee Relations (DOER) website at www.doer.state.mn.us/employment.htm. Searching and applying for open positions within the District is simple! Just follow these easy steps below.

Searching for a Job

- 1) Follow the DOER website link referenced above.
- 2) From the department drop-down menu, select Judicial Branch.
- 3) Click on the search button on the bottom of the page.

We also recommend that you set up a job search agent to ensure that

you see all Fourth Judicial District openings in a timely matter. By setting up a job search agent, you will be alerted by email every time a court position is posted (if you set up your job search agent to search for judicial job groupings). The DOER website provides a step by step guide on how to set up a Job Search Agent. Job Search Agent information begins on page 12 of the guide. Go to <https://extranet.doer.state.mn.us/Recruit/pdf/RES-BUILD.pdf> to view the guide.

Applying for a Job

You only need to submit one comprehensive resume that can be used to apply for any Minnesota Judicial Branch positions that interest you.

- 1) Create a "My State Job Search" account on the DOER website.
- 2) Create your resume through the online Resume Builder. You may copy and paste in your existing resume or let the soft-

ware create a resume for you.

- 3) Once you submit your resume, apply directly to the job posting you are interested in.
- 4) Be sure to read the job posting for any further application materials that may be required, such as responses to supplemental essay questions, and follow the directions provided to submit the materials.

If you should have further questions on searching and applying for jobs, detailed instructions are provided on the DOER website or feel free to contact Naomi Gooselaw, Recruitment Coordinator, at 612-348-8745, naomi.gooselaw@courts.state.mn.us or Tim Kraus at 612-348-2363, timothy.kraus@courts.state.mn.us.

Explore the possibilities waiting for you!



Welcomes

Ian Alexander
Lisa Brecht
Andrew Deutsch
Michelle Johnson
Dominick Matthews
Nicole Morris

Law Clerk
Sr. Court Clerk
Law Clerk
Volunteer Coordinator
Law Clerk
Sr. Court Clerk

Judge Margaret Daly
Traffic Violations Bureau
Judge David Duffy
GAL
Judge Toddrick Barnette
Criminal



Farewells

Patty Lynn
Judge Robert Lynn
Alana Strickler
Patrick Whiting
Dierdra Workcuff

Judicial Clerk
Sr. Court Clerk
Law Clerk
Sr. Court Clerk

Judge Robert Lynn
Criminal
Judge David Duffy
Family



Promotions

Kate Haas
Ann Nelson

Court Operations Spvr.
Sr. Court Clerk

Criminal/MNCIS
Traffic Violations Bureau

Transfers

Abdulkadir Afrah
Lynne Blom
Nancy Ellingsen
Andrew Stockinger
Barbara Wright

Sr. Court Clerk
Court Reporter
Judicial Clerk
Judicial Clerk
Court Reporter

Criminal
Judge Mel Dickstein
Judge Heidi Schellhas
Judge Steven Pihlaja
Referee Judy Mack

Events

monthly meeting calendar at a glance

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Bench Meeting 12:15-1:15 p.m. C2300		Criminal Justice Task Force 12:15-1:15 p.m. A2300	Senior Managers Team 8:30-10:00 a.m. C1400 Court Operations Supervisors 10:00-11:30 a.m. C1257 Jnt Committee on Corrections 12-1:30 p.m. C2300 Equal Justice Committee 12:15-1:30 p.m. JJC 3C Mental Health Committee 12:15-1:30 p.m. C538	Judges' Networking 7:30-9:00 a.m. C1400
Week 2		Administrative Staff 9:30-11:00 a.m. C1400 Criminal Committee 12:15-1:30 p.m. C1400	Executive Committee 7:15-9:00 a.m. C1400	Critical Issues 12:05-1:30 p.m. C12	Judges' Networking 7:30-9:00 a.m. C1400
Week 3	Civil Committee 12:15-1:30 p.m. C1400	Family Court Bench 12:15-1:30 p.m. FJC 172	Senior Managers Team 1:30-3:00 p.m. C1400	Juvenile Court Bench 12:15-1:30 p.m. JJC 3A Court Operations Managers 2:00-3:30 p.m. C538	Judges' Networking 7:30-9:00 a.m. C1400 Landlord/Tenant Bench & Bar 12:15-1:15 p.m. A1744
Week 4	Presiding Judges 12:15-1:30 p.m. C1400	EAR Committee 7:45-9:00 a.m. C538 Bench & Bar Committee 12:00-1:00 p.m. C957 or HCBA	Executive Committee 7:15-9:00 a.m. C1400 Public Trust & Confidence 12:15-1:30 p.m. C1059	Critical Issues 12:00-1:30 p.m. C12 Court Operations Leadworkers 2:00-3:30 p.m. C1400	Judges' Networking 7:30-9:00 a.m. C1400

Note: all meetings scheduled for the C-400 conference room have been moved to the C-538 conference room. Any previous reminders may still show C-400, but the meetings will be in C-538.

JUDICIAL

To present
an item
to any of
these
committees,
please contact
the judge
or staff
member listed.

Bench Meeting

Chief Judge Lucy Wieland
Agenda and Minutes: Cherie Nelson
1st Monday of Month
C2300, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Bench and Bar

Judge TBA
4th Tuesday of Month
C957 or HCBA, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Civil Committee

Judge Francis Connolly
Minutes: Lynn Fuchs
3rd Monday of Month
C1400, 12:15 p.m.

Criminal Committee

Judge Margaret Daly
Minutes: Donna Badje
2nd Tuesday of Month
C1400, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Criminal Justice Task Force

Judge Margaret Daly
Minutes: Donna Badje
1st Wednesday of Month
A2300, 12:15 p.m.

Critical Issues

Marsha Unthank
Agenda: Cherie Nelson
2nd & 4th Thursday of Month
C12, 12:00-1:30 p.m.

Drug Court Steering Committee

Judge Toddrick Barnette
Quarterly

Equal Justice Committee

Judge Pamela Alexander
Minutes: Jamie Smith
1st Thursday of Month
JJC 3C, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Executive Committee

Chief Judge Lucy Wieland
Agenda and Minutes: Cherie Nelson
2nd & 4th Wednesday of Month
C1400, 7:15-9:00 a.m.

Family Court Bench

Judge Bruce Peterson
3rd Tuesday of Month
FJC172, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Joint Committee on Community Corrections

Board/Bench
Chief Judge Lucy Wieland
1st Thursday of Month
C2300, 12:00 noon-1:30 p.m.

Juvenile Court Bench

Judge Tanya Bransford
3rd Thursday of Month
JJC 3A, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Landlord/Tenant Bench and Bar

Referee Mark Labine
3rd Friday of Month
A1744 (*settlement rm*), 12:15-1:15 p.m.

Mental Health Court Committee

Judge Richard Hopper
Agenda and Minutes: Manette Chineth
1st Thursday of Month
C538, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Presiding Judges

Agenda and Minutes: Cherie Nelson
4th Monday of Month
C1400, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Public Trust & Confidence

Judge Kevin Burke
Minutes: Jamie Smith
Quarterly, 4th Wednesday of Month
C1059, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

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STAFF

Administrative Staff Meeting

Mike Kelley
 Agenda and Minutes: Cheri Sayre
 2nd Tuesday of Month
 C1400, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Court Operations Managers

Katie Brey
 3rd Thursday of Month
 C538, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Court Op. Leadworkers

Human Resources Specialist
 4th Thursday of Month
 C1400, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Employee Appreciation & Recognition

Liz Dold & Amanda Bloodsaw
 4th Tuesday of Month
 C538, 7:45-9:00 a.m.

4th Ct Op. Supervisors

Jason Kujanen
 1st Thursday of Month
 C1257, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Senior Admin Managers Team Meeting

Mike Kelley
 Agenda & Minutes: Cheri Sayre
 1st Thursday of Month
 C1400, 8:30-10:00 a.m. &
 3rd Wednesday of Month
 C1400, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

**To present
 an item
 to any of
 these
 committees,
 please contact
 the judge
 or staff
 member listed.**

(updated April 2007)

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Staff Photo of the Month

Congratulations to Jill Hunt for being the first to correctly identify (Princess) Kay Richards of Conciliation Court in last month's Staff Photo of the Month. The photo showed Kay dressed up like the MN State Fair Princess Kay of the Milky Way next to a butter sculpture. The butter likeness of Kay was made from 4 pounds of Crystal Farms butter and was just enough to butter the cobs of corn served at the Conciliation Court State Fair Party.

Who is the person in the photo, why is he wearing the button on his shirt & what is St. Urho's Day?

The first person to correctly identify this information will win a prize. The winner will appear in the next issue of the *Full Court Press*.

Please email your answer to
Jamie.Smith@courts.state.mn.us. Good luck!



Full Court Press Editorial Team: Mark Thompson, Nancy Peters & Jamie Smith

For comments or story ideas, please contact Jamie Smith at 612-596-9271 or email: jamie.smith@courts.state.mn.us